



# Decoding Dyslexia CA

Educate. Advocate. Legislate.

## WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. **It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.** These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

*[Adopted by the IDA Board of Directors, Nov. 12, 2002. This definition is also used by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)]*

Studies show that individuals with dyslexia process information in a different area of the brain than those without dyslexia. Additionally, people with dyslexia are of average to above average intelligence.

**Decoding Dyslexia CA** is a grassroots movement driven by California families, educators, and other vested members in our communities dedicated to improving literacy outcomes for struggling readers, especially those with dyslexia. We work to empower families, advocate for equitable access to evidence-based literacy instruction, and raise dyslexia awareness.

## WARNING SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

The following pages contain a list of common characteristics of dyslexia from Bright Solutions for Dyslexia.

If a child has 3 or more of the warning signs, encourage that child's parents/caregivers and teachers to learn more about dyslexia.



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## Warning Signs of Dyslexia

### IN PRESCHOOL

- delayed speech
- mixing up the sounds and syllables in long words
- chronic ear infections
- stuttering
- constant confusion of left versus right
- late establishing a dominant hand
- difficulty learning to tie shoes
- trouble memorizing their address, phone number, or the alphabet
- can't create words that rhyme
- a close relative with dyslexia

### IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- dysgraphia (slow, non-automatic handwriting that is difficult to read)
- letter or number reversals continuing past the end of first grade
- extreme difficulty learning cursive
- slow, choppy, inaccurate reading:
  - guesses based on shape or context
  - skips or misreads prepositions (at, to, of)
  - ignores suffixes
  - can't sound out unknown words
- terrible spelling
- often can't remember sight words (they, were, does) or homonyms (their, they're, and there)
- difficulty telling time with a clock with hands
- trouble with math
  - memorizing multiplication tables
  - memorizing a sequence of steps
  - directionality
- when speaking, difficulty finding the correct word
  - lots of "whatyamacallits" and "thingies"
  - common sayings come out slightly twisted
- extremely messy bedroom, backpack, and desk
- dreads going to school
  - complains of stomach aches or headache
  - may have nightmares about school



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## Warning Signs of Dyslexia

### IN HIGH SCHOOL

All of the previous symptoms, plus:

- limited vocabulary
- extremely poor written expression
  - large discrepancy between verbal skills and written compositions
- unable to master a foreign language
- difficulty reading printed music
- poor grades in many classes
- may drop out of high school

### IN ADULTS

Education history similar to above, plus:

- slow reader
- may have to read a page 2 or 3 times to understand it
- terrible speller
- difficulty putting thoughts onto paper
  - dreads writing memos or letters
- still has difficulty with right versus left
- often gets lost, even in a familiar city
- sometimes confuses b and d, especially when tired or sick

*The above Warning Signs of Dyslexia is reprinted with prior written permission from Bright Solutions for Dyslexia.*

**Bright Solutions for Dyslexia**

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A sampling of resources can be found on the following page.



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## Resources

- ▶ Bright Solutions for Dyslexia: What is Dyslexia?  
[http://www.dys-add.com/videos/dyslexiaSymptomsSolutions\\_Part01.html](http://www.dys-add.com/videos/dyslexiaSymptomsSolutions_Part01.html)
- ▶ California Dyslexia Guidelines  
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/documents/cadyslexiaguidelines.pdf>
- ▶ International Dyslexia Association (IDA): Fact Sheets  
<https://dyslexiaida.org/fact-sheets/>
- ▶ The Yale Center For Dyslexia & Creativity: Signs of Dyslexia  
<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/clues1.html>

*Please note that DDCA does not officially endorse, represent, or have a legal connection with any of the resources listed above.  
For additional resources, see below.*

Connect with Decoding Dyslexia CA to stay up-to-date on literacy-related news, events, legislation, and resources!



DecodingDyslexiaCA.org



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Resources



Support Groups



Books & Films